

PR-R5-07-10242
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1) Will there be a bidder's conference for this procurement? If so, where will it be located?

Answer : No, there will not be a bidder's conference for this procurement.

2) What is your estimated timeframe for the offerors to submit their proposal? How much time are you giving us to prepare for RFP?

Answer : The solicitation was released on November 6, 2007. The response due date is December 6, 2007 at 12:00 PM (noon) Local Time-Central Time Zone.

3) When do you expect to release the solicitation?

Answer: The solicitation was released on November 6, 2007. It can be located on Region 5's website at the following weblink:

<http://www.epa.gov/region5/business/contracting.htm>

4) Per July 28, 2007 pre-solicitation announcement, this contract will be result to a performance based award, fixed rate, IDIQ, two year base period and three-one year options - Do you expect this to change or will it be similar?

Answer: This has changed. Refer to the F clause entitled, "Period of Performance".

5) Will it be announced through Region 5, 9, or both?

Answer: The information is posted on Region 5's website at <http://www.epa.gov/region5/business/contracting.htm>

6) Who are the current contract holders (I assume that would be the START 2 contract?)

Answer: The current Region 9 START 3 contractors are Team 9, a joint-venture between URS and AECOM and Engineering/Remediation Resources Group, Inc (ERRG).

7) Will the scope of services be limited to emergency response consulting services including field investigations and reporting, while excluding actual emergency remediation like excavation, oil spill clean-up (using booms and vac trucks, etc), actual remediation?

Answer: The scope of services can be found in the solicitation which can be located at <http://www.epa.gov/region5/business/contracting.htm>

8) Is this a single or multiple award contract?

Answer: This will be a single award.

9) Is there anything else that would help us reach a bid/no bid decision?

Answer: Information pertinent to this procurement will be posted on Region 5's website at the following link: <http://www.epa.gov/region5/business/contracting.html>.

10) Will contractors submitting bids be given access to the room where the oral presentations will be given before the actual presentation time?

Answer: Yes, offerors will be given access to the room where the oral presentations will be given prior to the actual presentation time.

11) Is it acceptable for contractors making oral presentations to bring refreshments for and provide miscellaneous giveaways to representatives from EPA?

Answer: No, refreshments and miscellaneous giveaways provided to representatives from EPA are not acceptable.

12) Will the contractor be required to maintain two offices in California, as is currently the case?

Answer: No.

13) It appears that there is no primary mobilization point required. Please verify.

Answer: The primary mobilization point will be determined at contract award as specified in the B clause entitled, "Fixed Rates For Services—Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity Contract." This will be the contractor's primary office.

14) On page L-31 of 31, it states that "The offeror's proposed Project Manager and Key Personnel are required to make the oral presentation." We assume this is meant to read the "Program Manager", and that by "key personnel", you are requiring each bidder to determine which staff to designate as key, and are not limiting the attendees to the personnel labeled as "key" in Attachment 9, page 9-17.

Answer: The provision entitled, "Oral Presentation Instructions" will be revised in amendment 1 to the solicitation. The following revision will be made to provision L.22, under Oral Presentation Constraints: "The offeror's proposed ~~Project~~ Program Manager and ~~Key~~ Personnel are required to make the oral presentation."... "The offeror's presentation team shall consist of the ~~Project~~ Program Manager, plus no more than ten(10) members of the offeror's team."

15) On page L-30 of 31, it states "Include only the members who will be attending and participating in the oral presentations. No other officers, employees, consultants, agents, or other representatives of the offeror may attend." On page L-31 of 31, it states "In the event that the offeror has proposed a joint venture/partnership or Team Subcontractors or Major Subcontractors, the Offeror shall have representatives of any joint venture/partnership for Team Subcontractors at the Oral Presentation." Since the offer is precluded from having "other officers, employees, consultants, agents or other representatives" present at the orals, we assume this means that the only circumstances under which representatives from Team Subcontractors are to attend the orals presentation, is if the prime contractor designates them as key.

Answer: As specified in L.22 under Oral Presentation Constraints, If the offeror has proposed a joint venture/partnership or Team Subcontractors or Major Subcontractors, the Offeror shall have representatives of any joint venture/partnership for Team Subcontractors at the Oral Presentation. The solicitation will be amended as stated in the answer to question 16 which will allow the offeror's presentation team to consist of the Program Manager, plus no more than ten (10) members of the offeror's team.

16) In Attachment 9, pages 2 and 4 of 12, "response personnel" are mentioned several times. Is it correct to assume that "response personnel" is defined as all members of the Core Response Team?

Answer: No. Response personnel refers to all personnel operating under the contract other than administrative personnel.

17) In Attachment 9, page 7 of 12, Section G, "Proficiency in providing personal care monitoring....", the word "providing" seems inappropriate as one of the elements required in the Core Readiness Team Leaders experience and background. Is it correct to assume that "Proficiency in using personal air monitoring....." is what was intended?

Answer: The following revision will be made to Attachment 9, page 7, Section G in amendment 1: Proficiency in providing **and using...**

18) In Attachment 9, page 8 of 12, Section I, "Proficiency in the preparation of written Health and Safety Plans....." seems inappropriate as one of the elements required in the Core Readiness Team Leaders experience and background. Is it correct to assume that "Proficiency in the use of written Health and Safety Plans....." is what was intended?

Answer: The following revision will be made to Attachment 9, page 8, Section I in amendment 1: I. Proficiency in the preparation **and use** of written Health and Safety Plans...

19) On page L-9 of 31, it states, "The offeror shall submit Letters of Intent signed by all personnel planning to work on this contract. The letters shall not exceed one (1) page in length, shall include percentage of time available, date available to start work under

this contract, and any contingencies." Does the government mean that only the personnel designated as key by the offeror should submit letters of intent?

Answer: The following revision will be made to the section entitled, "Instructions For The Preparation of Proposals", ii. Personnel, paragraph 2, in amendment 1: "The offeror shall submit Letters of Intent signed by all key personnel planning to work on this contract."

20) May the offeror bring enlarged charts or maps to the oral presentation, provided that a smaller original is provided in the delivered proposal?

Answer: Refer to the L clause entitled, "Oral Presentation Instructions", Oral Presentation Media.

21) On page L- 7 of 31, it states, "Volume II of the technical/business proposal shall consist of Representations, Certifications, and Other Statements of Offeror, required Plans and Procedures, all proposal...." Should this be volume I?

Answer: Yes, this is a typo and should say Volume I. This will be revised in amendment 1 to the solicitation.

22) B.1 MOBILIZATION. The RFP says the contractor needs to be fully staffed and operational at the time of award. Does this mean you expect the contractor to purchase, in advance of award, all the necessary response equipment that will be dedicated to the contract?

Answer: Clause B.1 will be modified as follows in amendment 1 to the solicitation: "The Government's intent is for the contractor to allow a contract mobilization period of thirty (30) calendar days between the contract award date and the contract start date. Therefore, the contractor shall be fully staffed and operational, ready to accept work from EPA at the end of the 30 day mobilization period. During this time period, any ongoing work from the predecessor contract will be transitioned to this contract. The costs for mobilization shall be included in the fully loaded fixed rate."

Note: The solicitation does not specify dedicated equipment or that the contractor has to "purchase" equipment. The successful offeror shall be fully staffed and operational at the end of the 30 day mobilization period.

23) B.2 A. CORE RESPONSE TEAM. Does EPA expect the Offerors to include 37,440 hours annually (18 FTE x 2080 hours) in CLINS 1, 1001 and 2001 representing the 18 member Core Response Team?

Answer: The schedules for the core response team will be modified in Amendment 1 to include an estimated number of hours that each offeror should use.

24) B.2 A. CORE RESPONSE TEAM. If each FTE in the Core Response Team is provided 2080 hours, should we provide overtime rates for those hours over our firm's net

available hours (2080 less vacation, holiday and sick) or will overtime be negotiated separately per Clause G.8?

Answer: This is a professional services contract and overtime rates are not applicable and are not prescribed in the schedule.

25) B.2 B.4. FIXED RATE. Does Level A labor rate charging end once the "hot zone" is exited?

Answer: Yes.

26) B.2 B. FIXED RATE. As Non-Level A Field Labor is defined as "all other labor and equipment costs for personnel who are conducting actions in the field", please distinguish between what constitutes a CRT labor hour as opposed to a Non-Level A Field Labor hour? What is the definition of a CRT Labor Hour?

Answer: Core Response Team labor will be charged in accordance with clause B.2 (a). Each of the 18 labor categories proposed under 0001, 1001, and 2001 will be billable for a maximum of 2080 hours annually for each labor category whenever that same labor category is not active under CLINs for Non-Field Labor, Non-Level A field labor, and Level A field labor. The contractor should price the core response team accordingly.

27) B.2 B.8. FIXED RATE. Will the contractor be reimbursed for equipment during an on-site interruption beyond the control of the Government or contractor?

Answer: The contractor will be reimbursed at the daily, weekly, or monthly rate from the time the equipment is mobilized to the site until the equipment is demobilized.

28) B.3. COST REIMBURSEMENT PORTION. Is EPA allowing fee to be applied to the cost reimbursement items? If so, can the Schedule for Indirect Costs be adjusted to include a column to represent the fee on these CLINS?

Answer: No.

29) B.8 RESPONSE TIMES it indicates the contractor must provide the baseline field equipment. Is this to be their own equipment or equipment from EPA region 9 equipment stores?

Answer: In accordance with clause B.8, the contractor shall be able to immediately respond from a predesignated duty station to provide field support, provide baseline field equipment, and have the necessary skill levels to utilize this equipment.

30) Paragraph one under section B8 says one hour response time and paragraph two refers to 2 hour response time. Please clarify?

Answer: The clause entitled, "Response Time", paragraph 1, sentence 4 will be revised in amendment 1 as follows: "Additional contractor support to provide response specific

equipment shall be initiated immediately and be available to respond within ~~one~~ **two hours** of the initial call.”

31) G-8. Payments – Fixed Rate Services Contract. (a) (2) refers to a withholding 5% up to \$50,000. It appears EPA plans to keep this until the end of the contract (five years). Is this correct?

Answer: Yes.

32) G.17 FISCAL YEAR 2007-2008 AGENCY SMALL BUSINESS SUBCONTRACTING GOALS – Does the subcontracting pool apply to team subs or pools sub?

Answer: The subcontracting goals apply only to the prime.

33) H.26 Government – Contractor Relations. (b) (1). Is it assumed that directions given to the contractor under the NIMs ICS system during a major response is allowable?

Answer: Refer to the G clause entitled, “Ordering—By Designated Ordering Officers”, section a, paragraph 2, In a catastrophic event, when the Contracting Officer is unavailable, the contractor may be directed to respond by one of the warranted OSCs listed at the following URL authorized to utilize this contract:

<http://www.epa.gov/oamsrpod/ersc/osc/oscdatabase.pdf>

34) H.65 (b) Limitation on Fixed-Rate Equipment Charges. How will EPA enforce limiting the equipment charge per CLIN only equal to the acquisition cost when a third party subcontractor is used to provide said equipment?

Answer: It is the contractor's responsibility to adhere to all terms and conditions of the contract.

35) H.65 LIMITATION ON FIXED-RATE EQUIPMENT CHARGES. If equipment provided by the Contractor is not part of the Contractor's inventory, but provided through an equipment subcontractor, would this clause apply since equipment vendors do not provide for a rate adjustment based limitations to an average acquisition cost? This clause references "Delivery Order." Should this be "Technical Direction Document"?

Answer: Clause H.65 applies to all fixed rate equipment items no matter how the equipment is provided. A clause entitled, “Limitation on Reimbursement for Rental Equipment” will be added in amendment 1 to the solicitation.

The following sentence will be added to the clause entitled, “Limitation on Fixed-Rate Equipment Charges”, paragraph a., in amendment 1 to the RFP. “Within 30 days of contract award the average acquisition cost of the fixed rate equipment shall be provided to the Contracting Officer and Project Officer.” Delivery Order will be revised in amendment 1 to TDD.

36) L.11 INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PREPARATION OF PROPOSALS. B. Technical/Business Proposal Content, b. Key Personnel, Personnel, and Equipment – Subfactor 4. The offeror shall submit Letters of Intent signed by all personnel planning to work on this contract. To whom shall the Letters be addressed: the EPA or The Offeror?

Answer: The letters shall be addressed to the offeror.

37) L.11. Where do the Letters of Intent go in the submittal? Would they go in Volume 2 – Cost proposal, where the Resumes are to be presented?

Answer: No. All information on page L-8 of 31, section b. shall be submitted in volume I.

Resumes shall also be submitted in Volume I. The last sentence On page L-8 of 31 under i. key personnel, 4th paragraph, last sentence will be deleted in amendment 1.

38) L.11 I. General Instructions. The proposal states that "equipment will only be reimbursed when it is actually used at a site or in response to a response directive", how does EPA plan on reimbursing the equipment required to be available 24/7, e.g. the response vehicles and related emergency response equipment? Is emergency response equipment required by EPA to be available 24/7 considered a “response directive?”

Answer: Equipment will be billed based on a daily, weekly or monthly rate. The Government does not require the contractor to have equipment dedicated to the contract. The Government is requiring the contractor to provide the services in accordance with the terms and conditions of the contract.

39) L.22 Oral Presentation constraints. There is a 100 slide limit for the Orals. Are the slides used in the corporate history introduction and in the closing remarks considered part of the 100 slide limit? If the same slide is used twice to make different points does it count in the 100 slide limit?

Answer: Yes.

40) The interview is to be the week of December 10th. Can you be more specific on the dates because we need to be able to mobilize staff? Will it be the 13th and 14th or the 10th and 11th? Will the recent response to the fires and major oil spill in San Francisco Bay impact the date for the Orals.

Answer: No, The EPA intends to hold oral presentations from December 10, 2007 through December 14, 2007. We anticipate that oral presentations will be held at the US Environmental Protection Agency, 75 Hawthorne St., San Francisco, CA 94105.

41) M.3 EVALUATIONS FACTORS FOR AWARD. Is the oral presentation scored as part of the award process? Please define how the oral presentation will be scored as part of the award determination.

Answer: The oral presentation will be evaluated as stated in the section M clause entitled, "Evaluation Factors for Award".

42) Part I Section C Equipment, And Attachment 1. Is the contractor expected to have the equipment available 24/7 for use by the CRT? 44) Part I Section C Equipment, And Attachment 1. Is the contractor required to have this equipment available or is it optional? Part I Section C Equipment, And Attachment 1. Will the contractor use the equipment or will they be required first to use equipment from EPA region 9 equipment stores?

Answer: The solicitation does not specify dedicated equipment or that the contractor has to "purchase" equipment. The successful offeror shall be fully staffed and operational at the end of the 30 day mobilization period.

43) Attachment 1 Exhibit A List of administrative costs item QQ appears to ask the contractor to put in overtime costs into the fixed rate. Would this include events like Hurricane Katrina that are catastrophic and require excessive levels of overtime? Is the contractor suppose to estimate the number of spills and removals that will occur in region 9 over the next five years and determine how many overtime hours will be incurred and then wrap this into the fixed rates? Will overtime be billed separately as it is incurred? Please clarify how overtime costs should be proposed.

Answer: This is a professional services contract and overtime rates are not applicable and are not prescribed in the schedule. Each offeror shall include all administrative costs applicable to their organization in the fixed rate.

44) Do you plan the CRT to be dedicated by issuing a TDD for the team or a portion of the team?

Answer: If a Task Order is issued for the core response team, Core Response Team labor will be charged in accordance with clause B.2 (a). Each of the 18 labor categories proposed under 0001, 1001, and 2001 will be billable for a maximum of 2080 hours annually for each labor category whenever that same labor category is not active under CLINs for Non-Field Labor, Non-Level A field labor, and Level A field labor. The 18 labor categories proposed as the core response team will be billed whenever those same individuals are not active under field, non-field, and Level A labor.

45) Should the core response team be priced as field or non-field labor? Table 1 on Page 1-15 does not provide space to designate non-field rates, non-Level A field rates and level A field rates for core team CLINs as Tables 2 and 3 do for non-core response team CLINs. Can sections be added to Table 1 for these rates?

Answer: Core Response Team members shall be able to respond as field labor, non-field labor, or level A field labor. If a Task Order is issued for the core response team, Core Response Team labor will be charged in accordance with clause B.2 (a). Each of the 18 labor categories proposed under 0001, 1001, and 2001 will be billable for a maximum of 2080 hours annually for each labor category whenever that same labor category is not active under CLINs for Non-Field Labor, Non-Level A field labor, and Level A field

labor. The 18 labor categories proposed as the core response team will be billed whenever those same individuals are not active under field, non-field, and level A labor.

46) It is our understanding the past annual LOE for this contact has been approximately 45,000 LOE. What is the justification for 65,000 annually as listed in the RFP?

Answer: These hours are for evaluation purposes only and do not guarantee a number of hours on this contract.